

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652; GDS

TAGS: MASS, MO

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOUCETTA:
WESTERN SAHARA

1. SUMMARY: IN MARCH 11 WORKING LUNCHEON WITH SECRETARY,
FONMIN BOUCETTA OUTLINED IN DETAIL GOM'S JUSTIFICATION THAT
IT HAS ACQUIRED SOVEREIGNTY IN SAHARA AND CONTINUED TO
REJECT U.S. DISTINCTION BETWEEN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AND
SOVEREIGNTY. ALTHOUGH TOLD FORCEFULLY THAT USG HOLDS THAT
USG-FURNISHED ARMS MAY NOT RPT NOT BE EMPLOYED IN SAHARA,
BOUCETTA GAVE NO COMMITMENT GOM WILL SO RESTRICT USE OF
THESE ARMS. SECOND MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 12. END
SUMMARY.

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2. WESTERN SAHARA WAS PRINCIPAL SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION
DURING SECRETARY'S MARCH 11 WORKING LUNCH WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER BOUCETTA. LATTER OPENED WITH STATEMENT THAT HE
WELCOMED CHANCE DISCUSS NOT ONLY BILATERAL ISSUES BUT PROB-
LEMS WHICH COULD IMPACT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. ON THE
SAHARA, DECLARATIONS HAD BEEN MADE BY RESPONSIBLE U.S. OF-

FICIALS WHICH, IF REPEATED, RISKED CREATING SITUATION WHICH COULD ENCOURAGE SOME SECTORS OF INTERNATIONAL OPINION TO BELIEVE THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE IN U.S. POSITION. MINISTER THEN OUTLINED IN DETAIL HISTORY OF COLONIZATION AND DE-

COLONIZATION OF MOROCCO, EMPHASIZING FRAGMENTARY NATURE OF EACH PROCESS, AND HASSAN'S PREFERENCE FOR PATIENT PEACEFUL MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH DECOLONIZATION.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE SAHARA, BOUCETTA CONTINUED, KING HAD BEEN SIMILARLY PRUDENT, BECOMING ENGAGED ONLY AFTER OBTAINING A CLEAR EXPRESSION OF ALGERIA'S POSITION AT 1974 RABAT SUMMIT CONFERENCE, WHEN BOUMEDIENE STATED HIS COUNTRY HAD NO TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AND AGREED TO THE PARTS OF THE SAHARA WHICH WOULD GO TO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA. SPAIN SUBSEQUENTLY TRIED TO CREATE A STATE THAT EVERYONE REALIZED WOULD NOT BE VIABLE, AND GREEN MARCH OCCURRED. UN IN 1975 HAD REQUIRED THAT SOVEREIGNTY BE RESOLVED BY INTERESTED PARTIES. ICJ RULED THERE EXISTED BETWEEN SAHARAN POPULATION AND MOROCCO TIES OF ALLEGIANCE WHICH, SAID BOUCETTA, COULD HAVE NO SIGNIFICANCE OTHER THAN SOVEREIGNTY. AT TIME OF GREEN MARCH SECURITY COUNCIL PASSED THREE RESOLUTIONS URGING PARTIES TO NEGOTIATE, AND MADRID ACCORD SIGNED. BY ITS TERMS, CONTINUED BOUCETTA, SPAIN CEDED ALL RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS AND AGREEMENT STATED THAT THE POLITICAL DESIRES OF THE SAHARAN
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POPULATION WOULD BE EXPRESSED BY THE JEMA'A.

4. BOUCETTA DESCRIBED FEBRUARY 1976 JEMA'A ACTION AS CONSISTENT WITH THE PROCEDURE BY WHICH ALL FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES ACCEDED TO INDEPENDENCE AND SAID IT WAS SIMILAR ALSO TO PROCEDURE EMPLOYED IN WEST IRIAN WITH APPROVAL OF UNGA, AND SUPPORT OF MOROCCO, MAURITANIA, AND ALGERIA. WHEN SPAIN GAVE UP ITS POWERS, MOROCCO TOOK THEM UP, THUS ACQUIRING ALL THE ATTRIBUTES OF SOVEREIGNTY. THIS WAS REAFFIRMED IN SUBSEQUENT LOCAL AND PROFESSIONAL BODY ELECTIONS, AS WELL AS IN THE ELECTION OF SEVEN (AND NOMINATION OF TWO ADDITIONAL) REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SAHARA TO MOROCCO'S NATIONAL LEGISLATURE. IN STATING THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOVEREIGNTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL, USG IS ENCOURAGING SOME SECTORS OF INTERNATIONAL OPINION TO ADOPT ERRONEOUS IDEAS REGARDING MOROCCO'S SOVEREIGNTY.

5. COMMENTING THAT FOREGOING HAD BEEN MERELY LEGAL ASPECTS OF AN ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL PROBLEM, FONMIN SAID MOROCCO HAD CHOSEN FREE WORLD IN WHICH TO LIVE, BUT EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO DESTABILIZE NORTHWEST AFRICA,

E.G., IN CANARIES AND MAURITANIA, WHICH IS WEAK LINK IN CHAIN, PERHAPS TO RECREATE SITUATIONS LIKE ANGOLA AND HORN. MOROCCO HOPES ITS SITUATION WILL BE UNDERSTOOD IN WASHINGTON, WHERE A DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN WHICH MOROCCO HOPES WOULD BE ONLY TEMPORARY. A PROBLEM WOULD BE

CREATED, HE CONCLUDED, IF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOV-EREIGNTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL WERE TO BE REPEATED BY RESPONSIBLE U.S. OFFICIALS.

6. RESPONDING, SECRETARY REMINDED FONMIN THAT USG HAS REMAINED NEUTRAL IN ITS PUBLIC POSITION ON SAHARA DISPUTE. PRIOR TO DECISION TO WHICH BOUCETTA REFERRED, ADMINISTRATION HAD CONSULTED EXTENSIVELY WITH LEADERSHIP OF CONGRESS
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AND DECIDED NOT TO TRY TO PROCEED WITH OV-10 AND HELICOPTER SALES BECAUSE THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN REJECTED BY CONGRESS, BECAUSE THESE ARMS WOULD HAVE BEEN USED BEYOND MOROCCO'S BORDERS. SECRETARY SAID HE WANTED MAKE CLEAR THAT RESTRICTION OF 1960 AGREEMENT REGARDING USE OUTSIDE MOROCCO'S BORDERS APPLIES ALSO TO EQUIPMENT ALREADY FURNISHED MOROCCO. TO PERMIT OTHER USE WOULD REQUIRE AMENDING 1960 AGREEMENT, AND THIS WOULD NOT BE AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO DO SO. ADMINISTRATION STRONGLY SUPPORTS REGULAR 45 MILLION DOLS FMS PROGRAM; CONGRESS IS RECEPTIVE TO IT; AND SECRETARY CONTINUED, IN HIS OPINION, CONGRESS WILL APPROVE IT.

7. AT SECRETARY'S SUGGESTION, VELIOTES THEN BRIEFED FONMIN IN MORE DETAIL ON CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS, EMPHASIZING OPPOSITION OF KEY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN. BENGELLOUN DESCRIBED CONVERSATION IN WHICH HE SAID SENATOR CLARK INDICATED HE MIGHT CALL SECRETARY TO MENTION CHANGED VIEW; AND SECRETARY REPLIED CLARK HAD NOT DISCUSSED SUBJECT IN RECENT MEETING. BOUCETTA COMMENTED THAT RECENT VISITS OF U.S. LEGISLATORS LEFT MOROCCANS WITH IMPRESSION THEY ENJOYED MORE SUPPORT IN CONGRESS THAN DEPARTMENT INDICATED.

8. SECRETARY TOLD BOUCETTA ARMS DECISION SHOULD NOT BE MISINTERPRETED AS REFLECTING LACK OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO. IN BOTH ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS THERE ARE STRONG FEELINGS REGARDING IMPORTANCE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND GREAT ADMIRATION FOR HASSAN'S COURAGE. BOUCETTA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION, THEN REPEATED THAT GOM UNABLE UNDERSTAND DISTINCTION U.S. MAKING BETWEEN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AND SOVEREIGNTY, AS GOM RECOGNIZES ONLY ONE MOROCCO. HE ASSURED SECRETARY U.S. ARMS WOULD NEVER BE USED FOR AGGRESSION, ONLY DEFENSE. BENGELLOUN
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THEN ATTACKED ALGERIA FOR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE REGIONAL HEGEMONY.

9. AMBASSADOR ANDERSON DESCRIBED ONE OF HIS FIRST CONVERSATIONS WITH KING IN WHICH HASSAN SAID HE WOULD NOT PLACE U.S., FRANCE, OR OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH HAD SUPPORTED HIM IN A DIFFICULT POSITION ON SAHARA. PRIME MINISTER OSMAN HAD TOLD THE PRESIDENT LAST DECEMBER MOROCCO WANTED DIPLO-

MATIC AND MORAL SUPPORT. IN REQUESTING USG IN ESSENCE TO ACKNOWLEDGE MOROCCAN SOVEREIGNTY IN SAHARA, WHICH WOULD BE THE CASE IF THAT AREA WERE CONSIDERED BY US TO BE INCLUDED AS PART OF MOROCCO UNDER THE TERMS OF THE 1960 AGREEMENT, GOM ASKING USG TAKE A STEP VIRTUALLY NO OTHER GOVERNMENT HAD YET TAKEN. HE THEN REPEATED SUGGESTION MADE EARLIER IN WEEK TO BOUCETTA THAT IN VIEW OF ABORTED OAU SPECIAT SUMMIT, EFFORT BE MADE TO FIND FORMULA, PERHAPS WITH ASSISTANCE OF A PRESTIGIOUS, NEUTRAL GROUP, TO RECAST SELF-DETERMINATION ISSUE IN TODAY'S CIRCUMSTANCES RATHER THAN ON RESOLUTIONS OF DOUBTFUL ENFORCIBILITY IN CURRENT SITUATIONS.

10. BOUCETTA REPLIED THAT NO OTHER GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN PUBLIC POSITION SIMILAR TO THAT OF U.S.; SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY SIGNED FISHING ACCORD WHICH ACKNOWLEDGED MOROCCAN SOVEREIGNTY IN WATERS OFF SAHARA; AND NO GOVERNMENT IS INCORPORATING ANY RESERVATIONS ON RESTRICTIONS REGARDING SAHARA IN AGREEMENTS WITH GOM. SECRETARY REITERATED THAT 1960 ARMS BILATERAL DOES NOT AUTHORIZE MOROCCAN USE OF U.S. ARMS IN SAHARA. BRIEF DISCUSSION ON HORN THEN ENSUED WHICH BEING REPORTED SEPTEL. SECRETARY INVITED BOUCETTA RESUME DISCUSSION MARCH 12, AND SECOND MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MORNING.

11. FONMIN DID NOT MENTION CONTENTS OF MESSAGE FROM KING. ALTHOUGH INFORMED MEETING WITH PRESIDENT HAD NOT

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BEEN POSSIBLE ARRANGE, AND INVITED HAVE FONMIN DELIVER COMMUNICATION TO SECRETARY TO BE PASSED TO PRESIDENT, BENGELLOUN PERSISTED WITH REQUEST THAT BOUCETTA BE RECEIVED EITHER BY PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT. VANCE

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